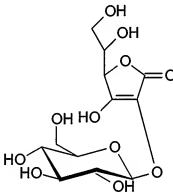


**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

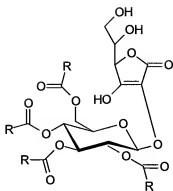
1. (Currently Amended) Isolated and/or purified 2-O-( $\beta$ -D-Glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid represented by the following formula (1):



or a biologically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

Claims 2-7. Canceled.

8. (Original) 2-O-(Tetra-O-acyl- $\beta$ -D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid represented by the following formula (2):



wherein each R in the formula independently represents a C<sub>1-5</sub> alkyl group.

9. (Previously Presented) The compound of claim 8, wherein all of the R groups of formula (2) are methyl.

Claim 10. Canceled.

11. (Previously Presented) A method of producing 2-O-(β-D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid comprising reacting ascorbic acid and β-D-glucosyl compound using a β-D-glucosyltransferase.

12. (Currently Amended) [[The]] A method of producing 2-O-(β-D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid and 6-O-(β-D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid comprising reacting ascorbic acid and β-D-glucosyl compound using a β-D-glucosyltransferase.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the β-D-glucosyltransferase is a cellulase.

14. (Previously Presented) A provitamin C composition comprising 2-O-(β-D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid in the amount of 0.1 to 30 weight percent, and a pharmaceutically, cosmetically, or dietarily acceptable component.

15. (Currently Amended) A provitamin C composition comprising [[the]] 2-O-(β-D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid and 6-O-(β-D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid.

Claims 16-20. Canceled.

21. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising the 2-O-( $\beta$ -D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid or a biologically acceptable salt or ester thereof of claim 1, wherein said 2-O-( $\beta$ -D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid or biologically acceptable salt or ester thereof is present in the amount of 0.1 to 30 weight percent, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claims 22-25. Canceled.

26. (Previously Presented) A cosmetic composition comprising the 2-O-( $\beta$ -D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid or a biologically acceptable salt or ester thereof of claim 1, and a cosmetically acceptable carrier.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, which further comprises at least one purification step to purify 2-O-( $\beta$ -D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid from the reaction product.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the  $\beta$ -D-glucosyl compound is cellobiose.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the cellulase is a cellulase from *Trichoderma*.

30. (Previously Presented) The cosmetic composition of claim 26, wherein said 2-O-( $\beta$ -D-glucopyranosyl) ascorbic acid or biologically acceptable salt or ester thereof is present in the amount of 0.1 to 30 weight percent.